1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

dipped into the water and the solution is then taken. Following the taking of the *gurj* solution a lemon is cut in half and salted and peppered. The two halves are left on the roof over-night and should be sucked the next morning. Another report is that a good remedy for malaria is to grind together *golmirich* (black pepper), *long* (cloves), and *mitha lakri* (licorice). The paste is put into a bit of water and swallowed.

Pain in the abdomen: this is relieved by rubbing a mixture of kerosene and mustard oil over the affected part.

Smallpox: there is no remedy for this, as it is due to a goddess and her will, but care should be taken that the patient takes only light foods during this period.

Snake bites: one should chew leaves of the *nim* tree. Crooke notes that "in Ahmednagar when a man is bitten by a snake he is taken to Bahiroba's temple, crushed Nim leaves mixed with chillies are administered, and the branches are waved over his head."[1]

Stomach trouble: for this the leaves of the *Babul* tree, (*Acacia arabica*) should be chewed and eaten.

Swellings: if it be the thighs that have swelled, *ghi* should be applied and rubbed in well. At the same time *Hing* paste (a variety of asafetida) should be applied to the nails of the leg affected.

Wounds: *chuna* (lime) is mixed with the juice of the *Kattha* tree (*Acacia catechu*) and the paste applied. The juice of this tree has good astringent qualities.

Fresh cow dung is very commonly applied, especially to the wounds of children.

The bark of the *Tinsa* tree (*Eugenia dalbergioides*) is ground into a paste and stops the bleeding from a wound.

For the wounds made by thrusting the iron trident through the tongue or cheek at the *jawara* season, the following mixture should be applied: Lime juice, some ground onion, *ghi*, wood ashes and *pan* leaves (*Piper betel*).

It is usual that each village has its *baid* or medicine man who suggests these simple remedies and advises what should be done. However, there may be no such person in the village, and even if there is such, the Kols have great faith in the Baiga, and may go to him.

1 Crooke, W., *Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India*, p. 410.

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Kols, Baigas and Gonds live in close association under village conditions. The Baiga priest is revered by both Kols and Gonds, and it is asserted that he has a *deva* living within him which gives him insight as to what should be done. The Baiga, however, is more interested in the occult than he is in prescribing remedies, and if he believes the illness is due to a spirit, he performs over the ill person the *supa* ceremony. It is said that he takes a *supa* (winnowing fan) and places on it a little lamp (*diya*), *ghi* being used to make it burn. The Baiga sits before this and begins to mumble *mantras* and to concentrate on the fire. He calls the *devi* or *deva* when he feels that the time is ripe. When the *devi* arrives, the Baiga falls down in a trance, for the spirit has full possession of him and speaks through him to the people present, telling them just what they must do. This usually takes the form of the demand for some offering to be made either to the goddess speaking through the Baiga or to some other deity named by her, generally an animal: a chicken, goat or pig. As soon as the trance is over, the members of the household begin to take steps to fulfil the words spoken through the Baiga, for the man should start to mend as soon as the offerings are accomplished. If nothing is done, the *devi* will be angry, and the patient is almost sure to die. Should the man die in spite of the offerings, it is said that something was probably wrong with them and the *devi* was not pleased. This ceremony is termed by the Kols *totah vidha*, and requires the winnowing fan, the lamp burning in an earthen vessel, and the presence of the deity. For this service the Baiga charges a fee depending upon the capacity of the family to pay. The fee is decided on by the Baiga after careful inquiry and is said usually to be high. If it should not be paid, the *devi* is angered and the man may die. Sometimes, they say, the ceremony puts them in debt, hence they may hesitate to call in a Baiga.

Another form of the *supa* ceremony is this: the person from whom a spirit or a disease is to be cast is told to sit cross-legged on the ground, facing east. Those who cure come from that holy direction, made holy because the sun rises from there. Water is sprinkled on the *supa* cleansing it. The person is then fanned by the sorcerer, first from the front and then from the back. As he does this he repeats certain *mantras* supposed to be efficacious in driving evil away. The man is asked to move a few feet away from the *supa* lest it be not exactly the right spot, and the process is repeated.

The sickle is often used in casting out spirits and diseases. The person is asked to sit facing the east. Ashes from burnt cow dung are blown over him from the hand of the Baiga, and then the sickle is waved over and about his head. This will drive the demons away.